

## Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

		2006 Actual	2007 CR	2008			Change From 2007 (+/-)
				Fixed Costs & Related Changes (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	Budget Request	
Partners for Fish and Wildlife	(\$000)	50,151	42,660	+969	+4,725	48,354	+5,694
	FTE	251	254			260	+6

### Summary of 2008 Program Changes for Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Request Component	Amount	FTE
Program Changes		
• General Program Activities	+5,270	+5
• Green River Basin, WY	+750	+1
• Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy	-495	0
• Gray Wolf Monitoring	-800	0
<b>Total, Program Changes</b>	<b>+4,725</b>	<b>+6</b>

### Justification of 2008 Program Changes

The 2008 budget request for the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners Program) is \$48,354,000 and 260 FTE, net program change of +\$4,725,000 and +6 FTE from the 2007 President's Budget. The request includes an increase of \$5,270,000 and 5 FTE for general program activities and \$750,000 for habitat restoration and enhancement projects aimed at recovering imperiled species in the Wyoming Green River Basin. The request also includes decreases totaling (-\$1,295,000) for bear and wolf activities that are being requested through the Endangered Species Program.

#### General Program Activities (+\$5,270,000, + 5 FTE)

In FY 2008, the Partners Program will continue to support the recovery of listed, candidate, and other species on private lands and will continue to implement habitat restoration and enhancement projects in geographic focus areas identified through the strategic planning process planned for completion in FY 2007. The Partners Program delivers its outputs (acres and miles of habitat) in priority focus areas with established habitat targets that will result in increased efficiencies to meet long-term goals of sustaining listed and candidate species populations. To accomplish this, the Partners Program will keep working with the States and Territories in support of their Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies, and with universities and other partners to assess the benefits of habitat restoration and enhancement practices on private lands. With the proposed increase, the Partners Program will restore or enhance an additional 2,546 acres of wetlands and 4,495 acres of uplands and 25 miles of riparian habitat for the benefit of Federal Trust Species.

#### Green River Basin Initiative (+\$750,000, 1 FTE)

The requested increase is part of the Secretary's Healthy lands Initiative, and will be used to expand conservation activities in the Green River Basin of southwestern Wyoming, where there is a critical need to coordinate energy development and species conservation across land ownerships. As part of the Secretary's Healthy Lands Initiative, the Partners Program will expand efforts to restore priority habitats on private lands for the recovery of listed and candidate species in support of the Wyoming Landscape Conservation Initiative in the Green River Basin. The Green River Basin hosts abundant wildlife central to hunting and fishing traditions in the region, such as populations of sage grouse, native cutthroat trout,

migratory waterfowl, and other species identified in Wyoming's State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. Therefore, it is critical to coordinate energy development and species conservation in this area.

The Partners Program will use the proposed increases for actions benefiting priority species in the Green River Basin geographic focus area. Species such as the native cutthroat trout and the Wyoming toad are potential beneficiaries of these efforts. The ultimate outcome of this initiative is to achieve sustainable populations of these target species. To achieve this outcome, the Partners Program, in coordination with all Service species-oriented programs (Candidate Conservation, Listing) and other partners (USGS, BLM, State of Wyoming, private landowners) will use the Strategic Habitat Conservation concept to identify habitat restoration needs, locations, and opportunities to maximize benefits to target species. These activities are consistent with the Partners Program Strategic Plan, planned for completion in FY 2007.

The expected results directly contribute to the Endangered Species Program performance measures of "Number of Candidate Species Where Listing is Unnecessary." The expected results of the Green River Basin Initiative are an additional 970 acres of upland and 6 miles of riparian habitats restored.

**Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy (-\$495,000)**

These funds are requested within the Endangered Species Recovery budget to support the Service's efforts to advance de-listing the grizzly bear in the Yellowstone Ecosystem. Eleven federal and state agencies have signed the Yellowstone Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy, which is the long-term mechanism providing both the regulatory framework as well as the post-delisting monitoring required by the Endangered Species Act for delisting species.

**Gray Wolf Monitoring (-\$800,000)**

These funds are requested within the Endangered Species Recovery budget to support the Service's efforts to de-list the Rocky Mountain population of gray wolf.

**Program Performance Change: Partners for Fish and Wildlife**

Measure: Acres achieving desired condition.	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Actual	2007 CR <sup>1/2/</sup>	2008 Base Budget (2007 PB + Fixed Costs)	2008 Plan	Program Change Accruing in 2008	Program Change Accruing in Outyears
					A	B=A+C	C	D
<b>Wetland Acres Restored/enhanced</b>	65,295	96,049	99,960	45,665	53,325	55,871	+2,546	0
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$8,996	\$4,247	\$5,042	\$5,308	+\$266	
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$90	\$93	95	\$95	---	
<b>Upland Acres Restored/enhanced</b>	306,770	380,024	283,460	226,952	286,639	293,104	+6,465	0
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$5,048	\$4,312	\$5,446	\$5,569	+\$123	
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$18	\$19	\$19	\$19	----	
<b>Riparian &amp; Stream Miles Restored/enhanced</b>	375	660	581	444	568	604	+36	0
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$6,068	\$3,466	\$4,544	\$4,831	+\$287	
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars) 1/	n/a	n/a	\$7,614	\$7,806	\$7,999	\$7,999	----	
<b>No. of Landowner Agreements *</b>	2,500	2,744	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,650	+150	0
<b>Number of fish passage barriers removed. *</b>	28	95	50	53	53	46	-7	0
<b>Number of in-stream miles reopened to fish passage*</b>	145	158	160	170	170	170	0	0

/1 These costs do not include all the costs required to restore wetlands, uplands, or riparian habitat. Other habitat costs that are not included in ABC costs include distribution of facility, maintenance, and equipment costs, and cultural permit costs.

2/ The performance and cost date in the 2007 CR column is presented at the 2007 plan level, which is based upon a projection of 2007 likely enacted made during the first quarter of 2007. The 2008 plan builds on the 2007 plan. To the extent Congress enacts a 2007 appropriation that is different from the 2007 project, the 2008 plan may require revision.

Column A: The level of performance costs expected in 2008 at the 2007 President's budget level plus funded fixed costs. Reflects the impact of prior year funding changes, management efficiencies, absorption of prior year fixed costs, and trend impacts, but does not reflect the proposed program changes

Column D: Out year performance beyond 2008 addresses lagging performance – those changes occurring as a result of the program changes (not total budget) requested in 2008. It does not include the impact of receiving the program changes again in the subsequent outyear.

**Program Overview**

The Partners Program is the Service's vanguard for non-regulatory, voluntary, citizen and community-based stewardship efforts for fish and wildlife conservation. It is based on the premise that fish and wildlife conservation is a responsibility shared by citizens and government.

**Long-term Vision** – The mission is: *"...to efficiently achieve, voluntary habitat restoration on private lands, through financial and technical assistance, for the benefit of Federal Trust Species."*

This mission statement is the guiding principle in reaching the Program's ultimate outcome of increasing the number of self-sustaining Federal Trust Species populations identified as priorities by the Migratory Birds, Fisheries, and Endangered Species Programs. The proposed budget will allow the Partners Program to accelerate progress toward this goal by increasing the number of identified on-the-ground habitat restoration projects directly targeted to sustain populations of priority species. The Partners Program will work in close coordination with the Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, and the Fisheries programs to identify these priority species and the habitat restoration targets necessary to increase and sustain their population. Increased integration of the expertise available in these three programs will result in greater efficiency and effectiveness in delivering proactive, voluntary conservation with private landowners which may preempt the need for listing new species under the Endangered Species Act.

**Means and Strategies** – Partners staff work with private landowners, Federal, State and other partners to identify opportunities for wetland, stream and other aquatic habitat restoration projects identified through the National Fish Habitat Action Plan. Biologists will also continue to serve as a bridge to owners of land adjacent to or affecting National Wildlife Refuges to complement activities on refuge lands, contribute to the resolution of environmental issues associated with off-refuge practices, and reduce habitat fragmentation between refuges. These efforts will continue to maintain and enhance hunting and fishing traditions by protecting wildlife, especially in areas of increased recreation, resource extraction, and development.

All projects will be responsive to outcome-based priorities identified in the Partners Program National Strategic Plan and produce results that can be reported under one or more performance measures of the Department of the Interior's (DOI) Strategic Plan. A primary benefit will be additional voluntary landowner agreements that will strengthen the role of citizens in the public/private natural resource conservation partnership. In addition to providing benefits for the Nation's fish and wildlife resources, these initiatives stretch the Federal dollar by leveraging non-Service funding at an average rate of 3:1. Projects are community-based, developed in conjunction with State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies and local planning efforts and utilize voluntary stewardship partnerships to implement the projects.

#### Use of Cost and Performance Information

In FY 2006, the Office of Management and Budget conducted an evaluation of the Habitat Conservation Program, including the Partners Program using the Performance Assessment Rating Tool (PART). Because of this rigorous review, the Program has linked its activities more closely in support of the performance outcomes of the Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, and Fisheries programs. The Program will use its volunteer, private landowner partnership network to contribute to the outcome-based sustainable population goals and priorities of those Service programs:

- The Partners Program will begin operating under the new Strategic Plan developed with stakeholder input that redefine outcome-based program priorities and goals.
- The Partners Program will coordinate with the Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, and Fisheries programs to develop **long-term outcome-oriented** performance goals and measures
- The Partners Program is working to improve **accountability** by beginning the process to establish regularly scheduled, objective, independent evaluations of the program.
- In an effort to improve information sharing and transfer, to eliminate accomplishment double-counting, the Partners Program continues to improve its web-based accomplishment reporting system (Habitat Information Tracking System) by enhancing its Geographic Information System capabilities as well as Service's financial information when implementing habitat projects.

In order to assist reaching sustainability the Partners Program will enter into approximately 2,650 voluntary landowner agreements to restore or enhance 56,000 acres of wetland, 293,000 acres of upland, 600 miles of riparian habitat and will treat approximately 61,000 acres to control invasive species. These acres treated for invasive species are a subset of the wetland and upland restored or enhanced by the Partner Program.

**Strategic Plan** – The strategic plan will be finalized in FY 2007 and the Program will begin operating according to all components of the Partners Program National Strategic Plan. The Plan guides the program towards (1) clearly defined national and regional habitat goals, (2) improved accountability for Federal dollars expended in support of the program and its goals, (3) enhanced communication to achieve greater responsiveness to local plans and conservation priorities, and (4) an expanded commitment to serving additional partners. The program will also continue to sharpen its focus on scientifically supported, collaboratively established focus areas to deliver its assistance. The Partners Program supports the DOI Strategic Goal of *Resource Protection by working cooperatively with partners to improve the health of watersheds, landscapes and marine resources by restoring and maintaining proper function to waters and landscapes, which in-turn helps sustain biological communities.*

**Private Stewardship Grants:** In FY 2007, the Service transferred the national oversight of this program from the Endangered Species program to the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. This management action is in support of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Act of 2006 and strategically consolidates the Service's private lands programs to increase the level of collaboration and the efficiency in their implementation. Through this strategy, the Service will create increased efficiencies in meeting long-term goals of sustaining listed and candidate species populations. The program is being terminated in FY 2008.

### **2008 Program Performance**

In a coordinated effort with the Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, and Fisheries programs, the Partners Program will focus its resources to increase the percent of self-sustaining Federal Trust Species populations in priority focus areas identified in the Partners Program's strategic plan. For example, the Fisheries Program has identified 11 populations of threatened and endangered species that are expected to reach self-sustainability including the Topeka Shiner, Apache trout, and the Roanoke log-perch.

Using a web-based Geographic Information System (National Focus Area Support System, developed in FY 2006) that incorporates scientific and partnership information to identify geographic focus areas, the Program will continue to focus project implementation in areas identified by Service programs as well as the State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies as priority areas for private lands habitat enhancement and restoration. Program activities will be concentrated in these geographic focus areas in order to make a measurable beneficial impact on Federal Trust Species populations.

The Partners Program priorities for FY2008 are as follow:

**Preclude the need to list additional species** – Contributing to sustainable populations of Federal Trust Species is the primary goal of the Partners Program. The Partners Program is a key on-the-ground implementation tool to restore and enhance habitat on private property to help meet the needs of priority species as determined by Endangered Species, Migratory Birds, and Fisheries programs.

In FY 2007, the Service initiated a National Candidate Conservation Pilot Project. The goal of this project is to identify and implement processes and habitat improvement actions that will remove or reduce habitat-related threats to candidate and at-risk species on private lands, and ultimately sustain or increase populations of these species so that listing as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act

would be unnecessary. The candidate and listed species targeted by the Partners Program are those that meet the following criteria identified by field staff:

- Known remaining populations on private lands
- Known threats to the life needs of these species
- Specific habitat improvement actions needed to remove or reduce these threats
- Habitat improvement actions on private lands would provide measurable benefits to the target species.
- Private landowners and other partners willing to work with the Service

A project completed in FY 2006 provides a model of how the Partners Program will continue to work with volunteer private landowners to benefit a suite of at-risk species in FY 2008:

- In FY 2006, the Partners Program helped preclude the need to list the Beaver Cave Beetle in Kentucky. The Beaver Cave Beetle is endemic to the Beaver Cave System in Harrison County, Kentucky and was a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The Beaver Cave landowner approached the Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service to design and implement a project that preempted listing the species under the Endangered Species Act. This project would not be possible without the proactive thinking, strategic planning, and collaboration between the landowner, several Service programs and other State and Federal agencies. As an additional benefit of this project, most of the animal waste and sediments from the landowner's dairy operation were removed or filtered from the tributary flowing into Beaver Creek. This action greatly improved water quality in the Licking River watershed and aided in the recovery of the listed Fanshell and Clubshell mussels.

**Restore wetlands**— Nationwide, restoration of wetlands is a Service priority for the benefit of numerous migratory bird populations, near-shore fisheries, shellfish populations, and protection of coral reefs. The Partners Program will collaborate with the Service's Coastal Program to identify priority opportunities to restore and enhance wetlands on private lands that are consistent with the necessary restoration activities identified by the Service's recovery plans such as for the piping plover, brown pelican, red-cockaded woodpecker, Louisiana black bear, and gulf sturgeon. Priority consideration will be to wetlands most threatened by encroachment and those that also provide communities with protection from storms. Additionally, these activities will directly support State Comprehensive Wildlife Plans and will also benefit numerous candidate species such as black pine snake, rush darter, and the Panama City crayfish.

- In FY 2006, the Program restored approximately 375 acres of marginal agricultural land into a forested wetland in Mississippi. The property is owned by International Paper Company and is located on an island in the middle of the Mississippi River. The project contributes to the restoration of ecosystems necessary to support waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, and Neotropical migratory birds as identified by several management plans. The project is also located in the highest priority conservation area for the Louisiana Black bear.

**Maintain hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation traditions**—While the primary outcome of habitat restoration work done by the Partners Program is sustainable populations of Federal Trust Species, there are often ancillary benefits to a wide variety of fish and wildlife species that are significant to hunting, fishing, and observation traditions. The Service works closely with State, Commonwealth, and territorial agencies and the recently completed State Comprehensive Wildlife Management Plans, as well as, its many non-governmental partners (Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, etc.) to identify geographic focus areas in which to apply program resources. Through this cooperative

conservation approach, the stewardship goals of varied partners can be achieved for the benefit of all fish and wildlife species.

- In FY 2006, the Partners Program implemented a cooperative project with a local hunting club and Ducks Unlimited to restore approximately 1,700 acres of wetlands in Wayne County, New York. The project was accomplished by the installation of a water control structure and sheet piling that flooded land. This wetland restoration project provides migration, brood, and nesting habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds.

**Implementation of the Farm Bill**– The Partners Program will continue to work at the national, regional, state, and local levels to provide expert fish and wildlife technical assistance to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in the development and implementation of Farm Bill conservation programs. This includes assistance as requested in development of program regulations and policies at the national level; identification of fish and wildlife resource priorities at the regional, state, and local levels; and implementation of on-the-ground conservation practices at the local level. Partners Program staff will work with the USDA, State fish and wildlife agencies, and our other partners and private landowners to identify opportunities where Farm Bill conservation programs can help pre-empt the need to list additional species under the ESA and foster the recovery of species already listed. Emphasis will be on working with partners to focus delivery of financial and technical assistance to private landowners for habitat restoration projects that will contribute to achieve objectives identified in existing conservation strategies (e.g., Recovery plans, State Comprehensive Wildlife Action Plans, Fish Habitat Action Plan). Examples of projects that will be funded with the requested budget include:

- In Nebraska, the Partners Program will participate with a riparian habitat restoration joint venture involving the Platte River Whooping Crane Maintenance Trust, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Nebraska Environmental Trust, U.S. Geological Survey, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Platte River Habitat Partnership. This initiative focuses on the channels of the central Platte River in Hall County, Nebraska. The project is specifically intended to restore and enhance habitats for least terns, piping plovers, and whooping cranes. The project will also benefit a host of other species that use the Platte River (e.g., migratory waterbirds). The restoration of open-channel riverine/sandbar habitats within the project area will enhance habitat conditions for these target species. Approximately four acres of riverine sandbar nesting habitat and over a mile of riverine roosting and foraging habitat will be restored, enhanced, and managed for migratory birds.

**Private Stewardship Grants Program** – In 2008, this program will be terminated; however, administration of unobligated balances and monitoring of ongoing projects funded with prior year funds will continue until the funds have been used.

## Program Performance Overview : Partners for Fish and Wildlife

	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Plan	2006 Actual	2007 Plan <sup>1</sup>	2007 Change from 2006	2008 Plan	2008 Change from 2007 <sup>3</sup>
<b>Long-term outcome Measures:</b>								
Percent of focal Migratory Birds that are at healthy and at sustainable levels (PART)	--	--	--	--	--	--	61%	+61%
Percent of sustained populations of aquatic species (PART)	--	--	--	--	--	--	10%	+10%
<b>Output Measures:</b>								
<b>Wetland acres 4/</b> # of wetlands acres enhanced/restored through voluntary partnerships (includes acres treated for invasives & now restored) <i>Partners Fish &amp; Wildlife (SP)</i>								
Upper Klamath	65,295	96,049	54,082	99,960	45,665	-54,295	55,871	+10,206
Lower Klamath	[332]	[500]	[750]	[750]	[1,600]	[850]	[1,600]	0
Green River	--	--	--	--	--	--	[750]	[+750]
Invasive Species	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Nutria Control	[29,226]	[33,334]	[24,113]	[24,113]	[31,572]	[7,459]	[31,572]	0
Listed/Cand. Sp. Stewardship	--	[20,396]	[3,800]	[3,800]	[8,015]	[4,215]	[8,015]	0
Total	--	--	--	--	--	--	[100]	[+100]
Total	65,295	96,049	54,082	99,690	45,665	-54,295	55,871	+10,206
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) (a)	n/a	n/a	\$4,867	\$8,996	\$4,247	-\$4,749	\$5,308	\$1.061
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars)	n/a	n/a	\$90	\$90	\$93	-\$3	\$95	+\$2
<b>Upland acres 4/</b> # of non-DOI uplands acres enhanced/restored through voluntary partnerships (includes acres treated for invasives & now restored) <i>Partners Fish &amp; Wildlife (SP)</i>								
Upper Klamath	306,770	380,024	283,835	284,898	226,952	-57,946	293,104	+66,152
Lower Klamath	--	--	[80]	[375]	[437]	[62]	[437]	[+375]
Green River	--	--	--	--	--	--	[80]	[+80]
Invasive Species	--	--	--	--	--	--	[970]	[+970]
Listed/Cand. Sp. Stewardship	[43,839]	[49,998]	[36,170]	[36,170]	[47,358]	[-11,488]	[47,358]	0
Total	--	--	--	--	--	--	[1,000]	[+1,000]
Total	306,770	380,024	283,835	284,898	226,952	-57,946	293,104	+66,152
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) (a)	n/a	n/a	\$5,109	\$5,128	\$4,312	-\$816	\$5,569	+\$1,257

	2004 Actual	2005 Actual	2006 Plan	2006 Actual	2007 Plan <sup>1</sup>	2007 Change from 2006	2008 Plan	2008 Change from 2007 <sup>3</sup>
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars)	n/a	n/a	\$18	\$18	19	-\$1	19	---
<b>Stream &amp; Riparian Miles 4/</b> # of non-FWS riparian (stream/shoreline) miles restored, including miles restored through partnerships (includes miles treated for invasives & now restored)								
<i>Partners Fish &amp; Wildlife</i> (SP)	375	660	581	581	444	-137	604	+160
Upper Klamath	--	[3]	[20]	[20]	[39]	[-19]	[39]	0
Lower Klamath	--	--	--	--	--	--	[5]	[+5]
Green River	--	--	--	--	--	--	[6]	[+6]
Listed/Cand. Sp. Stewardship	--	--	--	--	--	--	[5]	[+5]
Total	375	660	581	797	444	-137	604	+160
Total Actual/Projected Costs (\$000) (a)	n/a	n/a	\$4,424	\$6,068	\$3,466	-\$2,602	\$4,832	+\$1,366
Actual/Projected Cost per Acre Offered (whole dollars)	n/a	n/a	\$7,614	\$7,614	\$7,806	+\$192	\$7,999	+\$193
<b>Output Measures:</b>								
<b>Number of fish passage barriers removed. 5/</b>								
<i>Partners Fish &amp; Wildlife</i> (SP)	28	95	50	50	46	-4	46	-7
Upper Klamath	--	[6]	[5]	[5]	[1]	[-4]	[1]	--
Lower Klamath	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Green River	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Listed/Cand. Sp. Stewardship	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total	28	95	50	50	46	-4	46	-7
<b>Number of in-stream miles reopened to fish passage 5/</b>	145	158	160	153	170	+17	170	0
<b>Wetland Acres Assessed</b> - # of wetland acres assessed through technical assistance <sup>2/ 5/</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	baseline	baseline
<b>Upland Acres Assessed</b> - # of upland acres assessed through technical assistance <sup>2/ 5/</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	baseline	baseline
<b>Stream &amp; Shoreline miles assessed</b> - # of stream/shoreline miles assessed through technical assistance <sup>2/ 5/</sup>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	baseline	baseline

2/ New Strategic Plan measures. A baseline will be established in FY2008.

3/ Program change from 2007 President's request are based on the requested budget increase and PART Review cost estimates.

4/ These costs do not include all the costs required to restore or enhance wetlands, uplands, or riparian habitat. Cost per unit numbers represent Program funds coded directly to restoration or enhancement activities in the past year. Other habitat supporting activities, such as facilities rent, environmental and cultural consultations, etc., are not included in the costs shown for these measures, since these costs are captured against other performance metrics within the FWS Operational Plan. Cost per unit-also does not include leveraged and in-kind contributions from partners which provides twice the performance for every federal dollar invested.

5/ Cost not available for this measure.